

CLAIMS:

1. A clothing attachment device for an external component of a hearing prosthesis, the attachment device comprising:
 - an elongate member adapted to pass through at least a portion of an item of clothing; and
 - a receiving means adapted to receive at least a portion of the elongate member and releasably engage therewith;

wherein at least one of said elongate member and said receiving means are mountable to the external component and the engagement of said elongate member and said receiving means is releasable by an unlocking device.
2. The clothing attachment device of claim 1 wherein the elongate member is a pin member extending from a proximal end to a distal end.
3. The clothing attachment device of claim 2 wherein the pin member extends outwardly from a casing of the external component to its distal end.
4. The clothing attachment device of claim 3 wherein the proximal end of the pin member is integrally connected to the casing.
5. The clothing attachment device of claim 1 wherein the elongate member comprises a head and a pin member extending from the head to a distal end.
6. The clothing attachment device of claim 1 wherein the receiving means is mounted to a casing of the external component.
7. The clothing attachment device of claim 6 wherein the receiving means comprises an orifice extending into the receiving means from a front surface thereof, the orifice being able to receive at least a portion of the length of the elongate member.

8. The clothing attachment device of claim 7 wherein the orifice extends from the front surface to a chamber within the receiving means.
9. The clothing attachment device of claim 8 wherein the chamber of the receiving means has an inner wall of which at least a portion thereof is frusto-conical such that the chamber expends in diameter away from the front surface of the receiving means.
10. The clothing attachment device of claim 9 wherein the receiving means further comprises a pin engagement mechanism that frictionally engages the pin member on insertion of the pin member through the orifice and into the chamber.
11. The clothing attachment device of claim 10 wherein the pin engagement mechanism comprises a plurality of engagement members disposed in at least a substantially circular arrangement within the chamber.
12. The clothing attachment device of claim 11 wherein at least one of the engagement members is a metallic spherical member.
13. The clothing attachment device of claim 12 wherein all of the engagement members are metallic spherical members.
14. The clothing attachment device of claim 12 wherein the engagement members are normally biased in an engaging configuration within the chamber.
15. The clothing attachment device of claim 14 wherein a biasing means is positioned within the chamber which, when in its relaxed condition, displaces the engagement members towards the front surface of the receiving means and into the engaging configuration.

16. The clothing attachment device of claim 15 wherein the biasing means is a spring and plate, the spring being mounted between a rearward end of the chamber and the plate, and the plate being mounted to a forward end of the spring.

17. The clothing attachment device of claim 16 wherein the unlocking device is a magnet having a magnetic field of a strength sufficient to overcome the bias provided on the engagement members by the biasing means and so cause the engagement members to move rearwardly relative to the chamber when brought adjacent a rear surface of the receiving means.

18. The clothing attachment device of claim 1 wherein the hearing prosthesis is a cochlear implant.

19. An external component of a medical device, the external component comprising:
a casing;
a receiving means mounted to the casing; and
an elongate member adapted to pass through at least a portion of an item of clothing and be received in the receiving means and releasably engage therewith;
wherein the engagement of said elongate member and said receiving means is releasable by an unlocking device.

20. The external component of claim 19, wherein the medical device is a cochlear implant.

21. An external component of a medical device, the external component comprising:
a casing;
an elongate member having a disc and a pin member adapted to pass through at least a portion of an item of clothing; and
a pin member engagement device having a plurality of spheres disposed in a circular arrangement within a chamber, the chamber having an inner wall, of which at least a portion is frusto-conical such that the chamber expands in diameter away from a

front surface of the engagement device, the pin engagement device also having a spring acting and mounted between a rearward end of the chamber and a plate, the spring being adapted to urge the plate against the spheres within the chamber;

wherein an orifice is formed in the engagement device to enable entry of the pin member into the chamber and thereafter frictionally engage with the plurality of spheres, the engagement of the pin being releasable by a magnet having a magnetic field of a strength sufficient to overcome the bias provided on the spheres by the spring and so cause the spheres to move rearwardly relative to the chamber.

22. An external component of a medical device, the external component comprising:
 - a casing;
 - an elongate member extending outwardly from the casing and adapted to pass through at least a portion of an item of clothing; and
 - a receiving means adapted to receive at least a portion of the elongate member and releasably engage therewith;

wherein the engagement of said elongate member and said receiving means is releasable by an unlocking device.

23. The external component of claim 22, wherein the medical device is a cochlear implant.

24. An external component of a medical device, the external component comprising:
 - an elongate member;
 - a retaining means for frictionally retaining at least a portion of the elongate member in a first configuration and for releasing the at least one portion in a second configuration; and
 - a biasing means for biasing the retaining device into the first configuration;

wherein the retaining means is incorporated into the external component to enable the external component to be fastened to an item of clothing worn by a user of the external component, when the retaining means is frictionally retaining the said at least a portion of the elongate member.

25. The external component of claim 24, wherein the elongate member is releasable from the retaining means by momentarily counteracting the biasing means to cause the retaining means to assume the second configuration.
26. The external component of claim 25, wherein at least a part of the retaining means comprises a magnetic material and the biasing means is counteracted by applying a magnetic field to the at least a part of the retaining means.
27. The external component as claimed in claim 26, wherein the biasing means is a spiral spring.
28. The external component as claimed in claim 27, wherein the retaining means comprises a plurality of spheres disposed in a substantially circular arrangement within a chamber.
29. The external component of claim 28, wherein the hearing prosthesis is a cochlear implant.